



Gulf News Archives

Proud winner

Alex Corretja displays the 1998 Dubai Duty Free Championships trophy after defeating Felix Mantilla.

1998 draw justified all-Spanish final

There were 11 Spaniards in the fray

Staff Report

Dubai The 1998 final of the Dubai Championships was an all-Spanish affair with Alex Corretja beating Felix Mantilla 7-6, 6-1.

The match was well contested until the tiebreak, at which Mantilla didn't win any point and fell away badly in the second set.

The chance of there being an all-Spanish final was high that year, as 11 Spanish players made the main draw. One of them was Carlos Moya.

He dismissed Goran Ivanisevic in the first round and then fellow Spaniard Albert Costa in the second before going out in the quarters to Jonas Bjorkman.

Top seeded Bjorkman

lost in straight sets to Corretja. Marcelo Rios, seeded two, got no further than the first round, suffering a shock exit to Brett Steven. Another big name failed to live up to his reputation as third seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov — much to the delight of local tennis fans — fell in the first round to Morocco's Hesham Arazi. Boris Becker returned, but this time he suffered a pulled stomach muscle and had to default his second round match against Mantilla.

Doubles top seeds Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes thrilled the huge Indian expat community by bagging the title, defeating Don Johnson and Francisco Montana.